# frontier

Vol. 6: No. 51 APRIL 13, 1974 PRICE: 50 PAISE


*On Other Pages*


...MENT .. 2

...ERATION STRUGGLES ...AFRICA
...VARENDRA SINGH .. 4

...ural Notebook
...UDDHADEV BOSE
...ABHINAVA GUPTA .. 6

...DERN TAMIL POETRY
...RAVATHAM .. 8

...M EXPERIMENTS
...OGANKA SEKHAR RAY .. 9

...GALI ARTISTS UP TO ...
...SANDIP SARKAR .. 9

...ings
...HERO" OF OUR TIMES 10

...TTERS .. 11



Editor : Samar Sen

...PRINTED AT MODERN INDIA PRESS, ...BATA SINGH MULLICK SQUARE, ...CALCUTTA-13 AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY ...CRIMINAL PUBLICATIONS (P) LTD. ...SAMAR SEN FROM 61, MOTT LANE, CALCUTTA-13
TELEPHONE: 243202


## SAFETY PLAN

TO end the puzzlement over whether the Fifth Plan has been launched on April 1 or not the Prime Minister has sent a letter to all Chief Ministers to mark the inauguration of the plan. The letter might have gone as unnoticed as the occasion it professes to commemorate but for the gems of wisdom that make it sparkle. One of these is that agitation will not bring down prices. Nobody says that it will. It can bring down governments, though, as it has in Gujarat and threatens to in Bihar, Maharashtra and other places. The situation is explosive everywhere; it is just a question of someone taking the initiative to ignite it. If in some areas the rightists have stolen a march over the left, the reason is not that the people have entrusted themselves to the care of parties like the Jana Sangh but that parties of the left have failed to give a political expression to the deep discontent among the people over their mounting hardship. In their state of desperation, they are supporting even Congressmen who, in furtherace of their private ambitions, have turned against ministries run by their own parties. The agitations have not been, nor will be, as futile as the Prime Minister would like the people to believe.

The Prime Minister knows it and has made a two-pronged move to ensure that Congress ministries in the States are neither toppled nor weakened by agitations based on mass distress. She is trying not only to make the left ineffective but also to use it for preventing the right from organising popular discontent. The CPI has proved a loyal agent. It is seeing the spectre of right reaction everywhere—in Gujarat, Bihar, and even West Bengal. In the CPI's view an agitation is going off the leftist rails the moment it begins to strive for a change of the regime; the demand for a Cabinet reshuffle is leftist, the demand for a non-Congress alternative is rightist. The Prime Minister has naturally endorsed this novel thesis and feigned worry over attempts of a fascist take-over. Such political togetherness of the Congress and the CPI would not have been possible if the dissatisfaction of the CPI over the home policies of the Congress Government—the foreign policy of collaboration with the Soviet Union is unexceptionable—was genuine. The CPI's show of anger has the approval of the Congress; it is designed to facilitate the adimission of the CPI to

the leftist fold without which it may not be possible to bend left policies to the Prime Minister's will. The faint has succeeded, as is apparent from the left parties' two-day meeting in New Delhi. The militancy of other left parties has been leavened by the pro-Congressism of the CPI; agitations for removal of State governments have been struck out of the leftist agenda and the fear of rightist takeover has been endorsed. The circumstantial basis for co-operation with the Congress has thus been laid.

To neutralise the enemy within, the wholesale trade in wheat has been made over to the private sector. The Congress has never been free of internal feuds, but they have never posed a threat of total disintegration before the party. The crisis of the Congress synchronised with the decision for State takeover of wholesale trade in food grains beginning with wheat. Somehow the Government which has always succeeded in distorting radical measure to serve the interest of financiers and speculators whose generosity enables the ruling party to maintain itself in affluence failed to take over the wheat trade without antagonising the wholesalers. Zamindaris have been abolished but zamindars have remained with the Congress; but not so with the wheat traders. Maybe this was the first time that the progressive prattle of the ruling party had scared the privileged, and the traders tried for all their worth to foment dissidence within the party. A minority may have gone over to parties like the Jana Sangh and the Congress (O), but the majority were engaged in wrecking the Congress from within using as their instruments Congressmen of thwarted ambitions. No Congress Ministry could be considered safe as long as the wheat wholesalers remained disgruntled and ready to invest in Congress disunity. By reversing the take-over decision the Prime Minister has sough tto eliminate the cause of the sudden aggravation of in-fighting in her party. She hopes that adequate incentive to topple Congress ministries in the States will no longer be available to disgruntled Congressmen. She taken care of her party, and has been put in charge of the so that they may cancel each

## Mrs Allende In Wonderland

Mrs Allende should be given a warm welcome because of the way her husband died in Chile last year, though the way he tried to follow the peaceful path to socialism proved wrong, at a terrible cost to the Chilean workers, peasants and leftist intelligentsia. President Allende will be remembered as a tragic example of the illusions nurtured by the revisionists and the memory will be salutary if the right lessons are learnt. But will the lesson be learnt? On arriving in New Delhi, Mrs Allende said she was glad to be in this 'peace-loving land of Gandhi'. Such statements are unfortunate because it is time the world knew what is what in this bloody country where force is exercised with utmost ruthlessness by the Government of Mrs Gandhi to keep itself in power, where fraud in elections and in other activities supervised by the Government is a fact and where corruption has been institutionalised under the benign patronage of the Prime Minister and her coterie. The Government is hiking up prices of commodities of everyday consumption to enrich and placate business tycoons, profiteers, blackmarketeers and kulaks. Suffering on a mass scale is the order of the day, and to curb and crush any outburst the central police budget has been raised. It was Rs 135 crores last year. Twenty years ago it was 3 crores. The latest police budget (central) has a provision for Rs. 166 crores. "This is bullet raj", as Mr Jyotirmoy Bosu, MP, said in the Lok Sabha.

The police and the army indeed do a good job. In Gujarat they killed over 90 people and in Bihar, within a couple of days, 25. What will happen further in Bihar we do not know. As for West Bengal, the agitation launched by students dominated by left parties is yet to momentum. If it does, there a lot of bloodshed Mrs Allende know that this is the last visiting.

## Never Had It So Go

The Finance Minister, Mr Ch has at least once been when he conceded that there question of rolling back the Like most other people, he that the present government just not have the strength to do he deserve to be congratulated raising any more false hopes his, and other leaders', wont. from the obvious mismanagem the economy, the most imp reason for the price rise in our try is the political factor. The bags who pay for the election do so strictly on a quid pro quo An unwritten part of such that they would be given a free to raise many times more than amount contributed from the and that the powers that be knowingly ignore such mercile ploitation of the common man. W happened during the recent U tion is no exception to rule. In fact it has set new record of sorts, and nearly trades and business have be from the bonanza. But for the

For Frontier contact

APOLLO BOOK HOUSE,

K. B. Road,

Jorhat-2,

Assam.

...ions, they would not have dared ...ce the public with such ruth-... go with the government look-... on as a spectator. Indeed, one ... a sneaking suspicion that some ... tycoons have by now adopted ... new bedtime prayer which says: "O Lord, give us a few more elections". ... looks like that their prayer is ... going to remain unrequited for ...

Recently Hindustan Lever, an affi-... of the giant Unilever of Britain, ... been given a letter of intent to ... up a detergent factory in West ...gal. Tatas were also in the run ... such a licence, but they have been ...ted. Tatas' application was kil-... in the Industrial Development ...istry itself while Hindustan ...ever's was accepted and was even ...ed through the Monopolies Com-...ssion. For the common man it ...ters little if he is fleeced by Tatas ... by Hindustan Lever, for whoever ...ufactures the item, the common ...n will have to pay for the "licence" ...ey. And Mr Chavan for one ...ows better than anybody else that ... Hindustan Lever pegs up its pro-... prices, as it has indeed done, ... Government cannot just do any-...ing about it. But please don't bo-... Mr Chavan, for haven't you ... your colleagues said that you ... all for garibi hatao?

## After Pompidou

M. Jacques Fauvet, the editor of *Le Monde*, wrote a few days before ... death of President Pompidou ... "one can only hope, for the good ... continuity of the State, that the presidential election takes place before 1975 and that it does not do away with the need to re-examine the fundamental problem of the Constitution which was adopted in 1958 and amended in 1962. The very persons who approved that Constitution can, in the light of the uses and even abuses to which it has been put since, query the solidity of institutions which, in practice, more than in law, rest on the shoulders of one man alone". The President's failing health prompted M. Fauvet to suggest election when M. Pompidou would have had completed the fifth year of his six-year term. The state of his health had been a subject of speculation in the whole of the French Press since the summer of 1972. The concern was particularly heightened in the weeks preceding his death. First, he could not be present at a formal dinner hosted in honour of the diplomats posted in Paris and then his proposed visit to Japan had to be indefinitely postponed. The prolonged sickness which compelled M. Pompidou to drastically cut his public duties had once again exposed the 'fragility of a State embodied in the person of one man". This particular weakness of the State system was witnessed in 1968 when de Gaulle wsa found both mentally and physically incapable of coming to grips with the student revolt. The last two years of President Pompidou were full of mental agony and physical pain. The close watch that the Press kept on him could only irritate him but this could not be avoided because of the office he held. Perhaps he could have bought peace by stepping down from the presidency but he did not know who should succeed him. This explains why he continued to remain in office even though he knew that his once sure grip on the affairs of the State was loosening.

It is necessary to take note of the more important reactions that the President's sickness generated. The enfant terrible of French politics, M. Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, wanted the President to go in June to make way for a new election. It was suggested in certain quarters that there should be a Vice-President so that there did not ever occur a vacuum at the top but M. Pompidou said that the French did not like the idea of having a "President-adjoint". Moreover, M. Jacques Chirac, the new Home Minister, had always denied the possibility of a referendum or an election. An important guallist concerned over the health of M. Pompidou suggested that those near to the President should unite and ask for his retirement. This, however, did not happen. M. François Mitterrand was beginning to sound more and more like a presidential candidate when M. Pompidou was still alive. The people knew where the Socialist Party stood so far as social and political issues were concerned but the party lacked credibility in the economic field. Keeping this in mind M. Mitterrand became particularly critical of the Government's anti-inflationary measures. He also wanted to introduce a censure motion against the Government as soon as Parliament reconvened if the reshuffled Messmer Cabinet did not spell out its overall policies. M. Pompidou's death has not solved any problems but there are now new possibilities.

---

For Frontier contact

M. VEERAMALLIAH,

Station Road,

...

CALCUTTA-...

TELEPHONE ...

...19/74

---

For Frontier contact

MANITHAN,

No. 2, Mangesh Street,

T. Nagar,

Madras - 17.

# Liberation Struggles In Africa

## (Press Diary : December 1973—January 1974)

NARENDRA SINGH

FRELIMO'S first attacks into the white heartland of the Portuguese territory in Mozambique on New Year's Eve, made the most striking news story of the New Year, splashed by most news agencies of the world. Guerillas placed a landmine on the key-railway between Rhodesia's border town of Umtali and Beira, the Indian Ocean port. Equally striking was that after the explosion they did not flee. But stayed on with confidence to ambush and take the relief train with automatic weapons fire. This attack has been the most serious setback to the Portuguese administration and the Rhodesian regime. This rail link in Manica-e-Sofala province is very important for Rhodesia, because it is the sanctious-usting route, and also for the economy of Mozambique. Opening the war front only July 1972, the guerillas have fanned out over a large area of the province, the biggest in Mozambique. The Portuguese had made determined efforts, and deployed larger troop concentrations to stem Frelimo's advance in this area. Evidently they have failed.

To make matters worse for the colonialists, two more trains were also derailed on New Year's Eve, one by a mine in Tete province near the Malawi border on the rail link to the Cabora Bassa project and the other on the Limpopo line from Malvernia on the Zimbabwe border to Laurenco Marques. The last one was even more significant than the Umtali-Beira operation, since it was in an area where no beginnings of an armed struggle have been reported by the Frelimo command. In such areas, well to the south of Frelimo's current military operations, they only have a political network.

Also, the South African paper, *The Rand Daily Mail*, reported, quoting sources in the Mozambique capiatl, that a plane which crashed in northern Mozambique on New Year's Eve, was shot down by a guerilla rocket.

A Frelimo communique of December 31 announced that his militants destroyed two weeks ago a Portuguese helicopter in the Mani-region, killing several enemy soldiers. The rest of the soldiers fled away, leaving behind automatic rifles, ammunition and military maps. The militants had also attacked the concentration camp at Nauri during the first week of December, taking prisoner several puppet soldiers and capturing guns and ammunition. The communique noted that the operation was completed without the militants firing a single shot.

Frelimo again attacked the Beira-Malawi railway line on January 13, blowing up the line, derailing a train and bringing the rail traffic to standstill. A diesel locomotive and 5 trucks were blown up in a powerful landmine blast, which also destroyed several hundred metres of line. This trans-Zambezi line, formerly considered safe, was attacked first on New Year's eve and had a consequent nine-day traffic suspension. This blast close to Beira, vital port for supplies to Rhodesia and Malawi and also Zambia, brings to five the number of incidents in four days.

The rebels also blew up later in January a passenger coach and destroyed a length of rail line by exploding a mine at another point on the vital railway servicing Rhodesia. The incident occurred about 100 miles from Beira, between Vile Pery and Gondola. The road between Rhodesia and Beira, in places running beside the railway, was also attacked, as also the Portugue[illegible] in the area by the Frelimo [illegible] fighters early in the second [illegible] January.

These incidents have caused [illegible] found concern to the Portugue[illegible] thorities and to the Rho[illegible] Lisbon is getting anxious bec[illegible] bel activity is getting close to [illegible] itself. Morale in the city of [illegible] is extremely low. Until now [illegible] Mozambique war was far [illegible] European habitations and most [illegible] 2,50,000 white settlers had [illegible] unaffected. These rail inc[illegible] coupled with recent guerilla [illegible] on white farmhouses, led to [illegible] demonstrations in Beira on Ju[illegible] 17 and 18, demanding stronger [illegible] sures against the guerillas.

These eruptions of daring gu[illegible] activity in the white heartlands [illegible] Portugal rush its top soldier to [illegible] ambique. Gen. Francisco da G[illegible] Gomes, (former) Chief of Staff [illegible] Portuguese Metropolitan and O[illegible] seas Armed Forces [illegible] Mozambique and began a tour [illegible] Tete district. He visited the [illegible] tize division, one of the most alle[illegible] by Frelimo actions. An increa[illegible] the Mozambique military budge[illegible] also been announced.

*GUINEA-BISSAU* : The PAI[illegible] Information Service in Conakry [illegible] nounced on January 3 that Gui[illegible] Bissau patriotic armed forces [illegible] compelled Portuguese colonial tr[illegible] to withdraw from a number of p[illegible] in the Cubucare area in the South. [illegible] earlier PAIGC communique on De[illegible] ber 11 reported the Portuguese [illegible] craft dropping napalm on villages [illegible] the Indjassane area, killing two [illegible] lagers and destroying many hecta[illegible] of cultivated land just before harv[illegible] Portuguese air attacks were on [illegible] wide part of the liberated area, e[illegible] pecially the well-populated ar[illegible] The casualties were low because [illegible] special precautions by the PAIG[illegible] defence forces. The latter had [illegible] back at the enemy troops : Portu[illegible] guese-occupied positions were con[illegible] nuously harassed at Cufar, Cati[illegible] and Zime; daily attacks were [illegible]

the Portuguese in the North; largest attack was against the ene- fortified camps at Gadamel on the Katafine front, where PAIGC caused serious losses during attacks on November 24 and ambush on November 23, a motorised convoy on the Dara road resulted in the leaving behind five bodies and ment.

*GOLA*: A communique of the Command of the Angolan Li- Army (Accra Radio report, ber 8) claimed the killing of Portuguese soldiers and the shoot- down of three helicopters in one ment, and another killing of others during an attack on a on the Eastern front.

Popular Movement for Liber- of Angola (MPLA) fighters in ber killed 47 enemy soldiers, led another 59, and destroyed military vehicles in the area of la in the region of Alto Zam- Most of the attacks were against emy's lines of communications ville radio).

MPLA communique on Decem- 1, marking the 17th anniversary founding of the MPLA, poin- the new obstacles from the olonial Western monopolies, de- of holding on to the posits in the Western Por- territories. It acclaimed vigilance of the Angolan people liberating the "reformist manoeu- of the colonialists" and bringing large-scale "readjustments", the MPLA to correct its and resolve "internal con- tions". A reference wsa also to "certain natural splits" in movements, which "our enemies to exploit".

delegation of the Angolan Nation- Liberation Front (FNLA) was re- to be touring Zaire's Shaba meeting the Angolan exiles urging them to join the libera- struggle. In an article in the fortnightly *Afrique-Asie*, the FNLA has been accused of setting up "puppet" State with the help of American Government, under the guidance of the Zaire President Mobutu Sese Stko in a conspiracy.

**Fraternal Support**

In the UN, the General Assembly has condemned in strongest terms, Portugal's persistent refusal to comply with U.N. resolutions regarding its African territories. On December 31, the General Assembly declared that fighters captured while "struggling against colonialism and alien domination and racist regimes" are to receive prisoner of war status and be treated in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. The resolution containing this provision was adopted by 83 to 113, with 19 abstentions. The Assembly also condemned the failure of the British Government to take effective measures to put an end to the illegal racist minority regime in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). In another resolution, adopted by 101 to 5 with 22 abstentions, the policies of these governments were condemned, particularly of Portugal and South Africa, which continued to collaborate with the Rhodesian regime in defiance of U.N. decisions. Also were condemned all violations of the mandatory sanctions of the Security Council, including the continued import by the USA of Rhodesian nickel and chromium.

The Organisation for African Unity (OAU) Defence Committee, in its Conakry Conference in early January, called on all African nations to make total liberation of Portuguese-held African territories their goal for 1974. Resolutions were adopted on ways of combating Portugal's intransigence and terminating her obnoxious colonial policy in Africa. OAU has been urged by the freedom fighters to provide most sophisticated weapons and also well-organised training for the struggle against Portugal to people prosecuting their war of liberation. Tre Gullean President, Sekou Toure, in his opening address, called upon the African states to enter into war to wipe out the colonial and racial minority regimes in Africa.

Nigeria has promistd continued moral and material support to the people of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau. General Gowan announced a cash gift at a meeting with the delegation of PAIGC visiting Nigeria. The gift of 5,00,000 naira (U.S. $750,000) was a token support to the fledgeling republic to consolidate its administration and other institutions.

**Imperialist Collaboration**

France hosted the Portuguese Foreign Minister early in January. According to the French press, the talks between the two governments were concerned with arms and transport delivered to Portugal for use against the rebels in Africa. Last year sale to Portugal of 108 Berlier lorries, of the type used by French forces, was reported. According to a Radio Tanzania correspondent, the French Ambassador, in his clarification to the Tanzanian Government, admitted licensing the sale of the civilian version of some aircraft to a mining company in Angola. The MPLA revealed French plans for supplying Portugal with large quantities of military equipment to be used in Africa against the freedom fighters, particularly in Angola.

Britain has confirmed a governmental approval of delivery of seven helicopters to South Africa for use on the South African anti-submarine frigates. Two Hawker Siddley jets were also delivered to a Portuguese African firm, as replacement of the earlier Dove Transport plates.

NATO is seriously deliberating on installing a modern computerized communication centre on one of the Azores islands.

The oil crisis continues to play a dominant role in colonial and neo-colonial plans of expansion. Portugal has given permission to the Petrangol oil refinery in Luanda to double its capacity to 2-million tons a year. Another refinery is to be built at Ambriz under technical collaboration between a Portuguese company in Angola and an American company (the Riverwood Corporation). With an initial capacity

of 450,000 tons, rising to 700,000 tons by 1972, the refinery is to be ready within 3 years. A London-based group, "Angola Energy Ltd." has also applied for an industrial licence to build a refinery at Mocamedes, with an initial capacity of five million tons rising to ten million tons in the second phase. Despite Gulf's denials that Cabinda is no Kuwait the company has been drilling and having successes in its programme. November exports of crude oil from Gulf's Cabinda fields amounted to approximately 650,000 tons with one shipment to Japan, two to Portugal, 4 to Canada and 6 to the USA. During December, Portugal was the biggest importer of crude from these oil fields taking 32.3% of the total 660,000 tons, with 28.2% going to Canada, 25.6% to USA and 13.9% to Japan. During 1973, the Gulf company exported over 7 million tons of crude oil.

Following the completion of a feasibility survey, there are plans to expand the oil refinery in Matola in Mozambique, from its present 8,000,000 tons per year capacity to 2.5 million tons.

In Mozambique, the Cabora Bassa dam is looked forward to with great expectations by the colonialists and neo-colonialists alike. The transmission lines to South Africa have zeen completed. Surveys by the Portuguese Government have revealed immense economic potential as regards mineral, agricultural and water wealth. According to an expert, Dr Olivier, former Chairman of LTA, new reserves of coal, magnetites and other minerals have been located. A concession for uranium for 20 years has been awarded by the Portuguese Government to two metropolitan firms. A German group has shown serious interest in acquiring up to 8 million tons of coal per year at the mine-head in Mozambique.

A Frenh banking consortium will make available an 800 million francs credit to a Portuguese concern to build a 10-million-tons refinery in South Portugal. In December, a group of West German politicians, representing the three major parties, was in Portugal evidently to discuss industrial plans under the Commission for European Corporation.

**Other Trends**

In Portugal, there seems to be an upsurge of people's feelings against the local repressive measures. The police arrested about 100 school pupils, who went to Lisbon University to support the protesting students. Among those arrested were even girls of 13. The protest was against lack of academic freedom.

Several political prisoners are rotting in Portuguese jails and several legal units are pending against the political opponents of the regime, leading to the latters' serious harassment. Following the arrest in November of Herminio Palma Inacio, leader of the resistance movement, LUAR (Liga de Uniso e de Accao Revolucionaria), many others have been detained. Among them are also priests and Catholic leaders. Palma's torture in the prison led to popular protests from several countries in Europe. Even within the armed forces contradictions have appeared as evident in the rumours of an abortive pre-X'mas coup in Portugal.

The Catholic missionary, Father Adrian Hastings who exposed the first details of the massacre of Africans in Wiriyamu (Mozambique), has in a recent publication castigated strongly the Western capitalists in general and Germans in particular. According to him, more and more German investment is going into Portuguese Africa and the greater part of the Portuguese military equipment there comes from Germany.

A medical committee for Angola, based in Amsterdam, has given aid worth about 1.3 million guilders to the three liberation movements in Africa.

*Cultural Notebook*

## Buddhadev Bose

ABHINAVA GUPTA

THOSE who are neither young nor very old are to associate Buddhadev Bose with first stirrings of adolescent with its revolt, bitter-sweet sense of guilt and search for ness in the realm of fantasy with idealism. This is a phenomenon true of all creative especially since the beginning the romantic movement. But case of Buddhadev Bose wit what may be called adolescence fixation. Wha unique about him is that he endeavoured to analyse his sion, never came to terms wit Still less would he outgrow it part of a mere embroidery, lit in origin and brought about later excursion into the sym heritage and creative experim in the West. This explains his passion for Baudelaire and but it grew out of his earlier fication with Swinburne and Wilde. The transition was and facile and involved no cular growth in intellectual or tional depths. The process changing literary passion and ty was not accompanied by live experience and changing ness. It was brought about by exercusions into reading.

The streak of dilettantism never far removed from his ings—even in his mature years is one of those literary khose source of inspiration seldom life itself but works of art under whose influ he was at different phases. His writings bear the marks of various influences, so much so his later original composition scarcely distinguishable from translations of Baudelaire and But his early writings seem

ginal and authentic since they are rooted in his personal feelings of the period and derive from a less complex literary source. Swinburne and Wilde could be more easily absorbed into an attitude that was essentially adolescent. The relative authenticity of Buddhadev Bose's such expressions of the same decadent faith resulted from the uncomplex nature of his own feelings and the relative naivete of the literary source itself. But in trying to assimilate more complex sources of literary decadence into his attitude to life and art he only succeeded in excluding what is most explosive and terrifying in the tradition beginning with Baudelaire. He could never share the true romantic agony. It was not given to him to create the nightmarish world of Dostoevsky whom he grew to adore. All that is profound and socially meaningful, violent and rebellious, searching and nostalgic in this tradition eluded him.

And this is more than a personal failure. Behind the personal inadequacy lies a deeper social anomaly. The romantic agony in Western literature was a product of the socio-historical process—the rise of industrial capitalism. It was a protest against the increasing loss of individuality and devaluation of imagination by a positivist outlook. In opposing art to life Baudelaire and his followers were in fact recording their contempt for the world of bourgeois values. All that is significant in this literary tradition is based on a rejection of the contemporary reality and viewing of art as a contending and independent domain into which one may escape from the horror and ugliness of life. The vision of the nightmare is a part of this tradition but the glory of a new existence as embodied in its creations is an affirmation of historical possibilities. Both the nightmare and the hope were part of one contemporary reality. The most genuine part of the Western literary tradition of this period is a record of this two-fold affirmation of horror and glory.

Much of this historical experience has remained outside the purview of our own national existence. And yet it remains a part of our cultural inheritance. Hence arises the social anomaly which condemns to sterility and shallowness all artistic creations in this country which derive solely from literary inspiration from the West. This derivation is partly true of all literary creations in Bengali from Madhusudan onwards. But all that is genuinely creative in modern Bengali literature derives more truly from real social-historical experiences and owes much more to our own literary tradition. This holds not only for Tagore but for Buddhadev Bose's own contemporaries like Jibanananda, Bishnu Dey, and even Sudhin Datta. All these three are more derivative than Tagore and yet they succeed in striking an authentic note. The Western literary inheritance almost turns them into curiosities—very nearly isolated from the genuine living experience of their countrymen. But they somehow resist the process and remain attached to their soil—Jibanananda by his remembrance of things past, Bishnu Dey by his conscious search for roots and identification with the people and Sudhin Datta by a certain intellectual honesty and objectivity. Buddhadev Bose's failure demonstrates the tragedy of a derivative cultural tradition at its extreme point of exhaustion. (Was it the awareness of this that led him to his studies of the Mahabharata and the Puranas towards the end of his life?) It is to him that we must trace the more conscious cultivation of Western influences in our present-day literary circles. Only these latter-day poseurs lack his sound literary culture.

Both personally and socially Buddhadev Bose was at the farthest remove from the phenomenon of the diseased artist in a diseased society. In the West the disease has long been contained and made respectable. It has been turned into a plea for conformism and conservatism—a resigned acceptance of the existing social realities and a denial of the revolutionary function of imagination. The tradition which embodies the most violent reaction against the nightmarish horror of bourgeois reality has turned into its opposite—an aquiescence in that reality in the name of self-sufficiency of artistic creation. There is no doubt that Buddhadev Bose fell in with this development for he found the present-day Western society congenial to his artistic faith. And all his life he sought to make his own poetry an embodiment of this faith. His total aversion to social and intellectual analysis deprived him of a true perspective on this phase of development in European literature and its significance in history. It is a pity for, more genuinely, he belonged to the aestheticism which partly characterised the early Tagore. All his best writings are imbued with this spirit. It is this aestheticism which has made him one of the finest writers of Bengali prose. He is perhaps the only Bengali writer who has never written an inelegant sentence or used a loose and inexact word. If elegance of form and structure, precision and method are virtues to be cultivated Buddhadev Bose offers the model. His faith in art as a parallel and contending world created by man to oppose the disorder and ugliness of nature had one salutary consequence in this 'dedication' to the beauty of form. The disorder of early passion was sublimated into an inordinate passion for order in arrangement of words. Apart from these purely formal virtues Buddhadev Bose remains one of the most readable and perceptive critics of Tagore. And for a long time to come his essays and translations will remain the best introduction in Bengali to modern Western literature. In the thirties he also set an example of how to bring together poets of different temperaments and creeds and let them develop as they wished—in his poetry journal *Kabita*.

# Modern Tamil Poetry

IRABATHAM

IT is the Mini age. People have been bored stiff by 70 MM movies and are flocking to see personal movies made by idiosyncratic directors, e.g. *The Last Tango in Paris*. Artists are always individualistic and people are slowly realising that.

In Tamil poetry too, this trend has caught on. Tamil poetry is supposed to be the oldest, at least according to Tamil scholars and during the ages there have always been enough versifiers to write any number of poetic lines on every conceivable occasion.

But now some of the younger poets who write in the modern idiom have started writing mini poetry. Not only that, they have started publishing mini books.

The first to start such a trend were a group of people associated with an avant-garde literary monthly *Ka Cha Ta Tha Para*. They published a small book *Pulli* (dot) in December 1972 (size 6cm × 5cm) representing 16 poets and their 32 poems. A host of other groups and individuals copied them and followed suit. As on date some 15 such anthologies have been published and have been noticed by a larger public than before.

According to Miroslav Holub the Czech poet, "poetry should be written for people untouched by poetry", for instance for those who do not even know that it should at all be for them. I would like them to read poems as naturally as they read the papers or go to a football game. Not to consider it as anything more difficult, or effeminate or praiseworthy".

These younger Tamil poets are writing exactly the same kind of poetry. The new verse is a kind of open free verse wherein the basic idea is expressed forcefully or in a subtle way. No ornamentation, no turn of the phrases and above all, neo-poetic cliches. Here we are reminded of a critical dictum of W. H. Auden: Primitive poetry says simple things in a roundabout way where modern poetry tries to say complicated things straightforwardly.

For instance let us take a poem by 'Nilamani' which created a lot of controversy.

The title of the poem is 'Invitation'.

Advertisements proclaim
Use Nirodh.
Use Nirodh.
Come awhile.

On first glance this poem may seem to decry family planning but the irony is much deeper than that. According to Marshall Mcluhan, though technologically we have advanced, yet our minds are not attuned to the environment as they should have been.

In the same way, here the poet says that though we have adopted family planning as a national goal, yet we have not shed our hypocrisy and double-talk as regards our moral stance. The poet tries to disturb our mental attitude regarding morals.

She became my sister
because she is not
beautiful.

This types of pungency and acidity is new on the Tamil poetry scene.

Writers' of the previous generation usually hailed from the upper middle class or the landed gentry but the origin of these new poets is humble. They are lower middle class and some hail from peasant or working class families. Most of these poets are teachers, lower echelon civil servants and students. They are terribly disillusioned with the politics of the day, are utterly cynical, though some of them strike leftist poses more as a gesture of bravado than out of genuine interest.

A. Ranganathan writes on Independence.

We received it in midnight
Dawn is yet to arrive.

Abdul Rahaman's ironical piece on 'Plans' is double-edged.

If boons
turn into
curses
then why more
penance?

But it has to be admitted that when it comes to love, some of these poets are still coy and romantic.

During the last generation Tamil has turned away from Sanskrit with a vengeance and it is now refreshing and at the same time a little bit irritating too to see over-Sanskritisation. As M. N. Srinivas pointed out very aptly, the upper classes are getting westernised beyond recognition whereas the lower classes are becoming Sanskritised. The urban intelligentsia uses more and more English words in their Tamil writings whereas people hailing from the newly refined rural based lower classes use excessive Sanskrit words as means of ornamentation or decoration. Tamil, like any other Indian language, has a number of words of Sanskrit origin in its vocabulary but the fact has also to be admitted that the use of Sanskrit words in the Tamil syntax gives it an exotic flavour which is at least avoidable. Some people go to ridiculous lengths by Tamilising the Sanskrit words which makes it much more absurd.

When modern poetry achieves its spontaneity and contemporariness by its use of spoken language, a certain amount of English has necessarily to be tolerated.

Mahaprabhu has written a poem on brassieres.

When I tie up
my bra a little higher
Why so many people
behind?

This poem is titled Followers. This is a very apt title and if the poet had striven to find its exact Tamil equivalent the whole meaning of the poem would have been lost.

The dominant voices among these moderns are Gnanakoothan, Ve. Mali and Shanmuga Subbiah. Though their poems are elegant and witty they express a rebellious attitude and as such are still unacceptable to the literary Establishment.

# Sham Experiments

MRIGANKA SEKHAR RAY

ONCE a mouse fell into a beer-barrel and when it came out roughly soaked in froth, it became tall high and challenged a growling cat for a duel. In *Jadubangsha*, maniacal, drunken ravings of film's young protagonists recall one of the story of the intoxicated mouse. The film purports to be a document of contemporary mores reflecting the angst, neurosis and the complex problems of a decade through the technique and language of modern cinema. If contemporaneity means a few bouts of compulsive drinking, a constant chattering of slang and abuse, a cacophony of pointless platitudes and if modern film-techniques mean a wild assortment of ill-executed visual gimmicks and some misguided influences, then the tall claims made by the film's advocates are indeed justified. But actually the film is a childish chronicle of the inanities, a cantata of abysmal nonsense.

The four young characters are supposed to be the victims of social pressure and in between their alcoholic delirium, some glimpses of their family-life appear on the screen. All these are all run-of-the-mill melodramatic pieces and the characters are neither Hamlet's nor Kierkegaard-Camus' spiritual heirs, but Devdases in drainpipes. There are two sub-plots, one with Uttam-kumar as a frustrated idealist, a kind of fallen idol and the other with Sharmila Tagore as a lesbian-psycho. The handling of these episodes is utterly inept, with some futile exercises in crude eroticism. There is a contrived originality in the use of sound and visuals throughout the entire film and there is a suspicion that the director often hides himself behind the mask of visual jugglery not because of his search for new forms, but because of his immature story-telling and even the so-called avant-garde film-methods become irritating eye-sores because of the poor technical expertise. The apocalyptic implications of the story-material have apparently gone over the director's head and his grasp of the objective socio-political background as depicted in the film is just sub-adolescent.

If *Jadubanghsa* is a pretentious dud, another new venture *Ek Din Surya*, boldly advertised as an "art-film" (whatever that might mean) is another amateurish, meaningless, shapeless, mindless mass of celluloid which generally passes for experimental film making in our country. The hero is a painter torn between the age-old conflict between fine and commercial art. He has a girl-friend with a Colgate smile. She has a problem with her runway mother. And there is her myopic uncle who renders a free course in Whitman and how to be in love without actually making it. The girl breaks from her lover for reasons best known to her. The boy chases her to Ghatsila and there is a reunion amid the boulders on the river-bed, after we have been treated with a gory flashback of tribal fury killing the girl's father. And somebody must have told the director that a movie should move, so he leads his character on an eternal tour on the Calcutta streets and some snippets of Maidan scenes, swinging youngsters, a couple of roadside Romeos and some tame processions seem to represent this throbbing, thrilling city. In fact, the whole film runs like a string of unrelated images as in a surrealistic nightmare. But as the director is no Dali, Chagall or Leger, the images lack any depth of inner meaning. And the director should do well to remember that one must always master the form before trying to break it.

# Bengali Artists Up To 1945

SANDIP SARKAR

RABINDRA Bharati Society organised an exhibition of works by Bengali artists up to 1945. It cannot be said that the selection of artists was representative in any way. How to explain such omissions as Hemen Mazumdar, Atul Bose and last but not the least, the Calcutta Group? Most of the exhibits were of the Bengal School which most of the time does not ring a bell in the modern viewer's mind—pretty illustrations, that's all. However, there were a few, indeed too few, which had some pictorial quality. Among these Abanindranath Tagore's two miniatures "Persian Prince and his Sweetheart' and the 'Dacca Stripes' gave the viewers an idea of the master's sure touch. His composition and colours had strange power which enchanted one. Jyotirindranath Tagore's pencil portraits spoke eloquently of the sitters. Jamini Roy's 'Girl Seated'—one of his early works done with a dry-point—stood out with a vehemence from the rest of the exhibits. Among the lesser known artists of the period B. N. Ghose's 'Beggars at Kalighat' was one of the best, done in the realistic line. Sunayani Devi's 'Mother Joshoda' drew attention for its quaint folkish stylisation. Samar Ghosh's 'Hair Dressing of Village Women' had space arranged beauifully with figures placed and stylised without one noticing the craftsmanship that the artist had. The rest was just waste, probably important to an art historian, but aesthetically meaningless.

---

CORRECTION

In 'Dissent and Hypocrisy" (March 23, 1974), Para 3, lines 9 and 10, the reference is to 'the prevailing conditions in *a* socialist State', and not to *all* socialist States.

**Vivek Saha**

The third one-man show by Vivek Saha, at the Academy of Fine Arts spoke of the artist's calibre as an innovator. He paints with his fingers with water colour. Naturally his painting is linear to a large extent, but one feels that fingers cannot create the nuances that a brush can. Most of the time he almost gets there but somehow at the very last moment he fails. This is partly because he depends entirely on his emotions and discards his intellect and partly because of the inability of the fingers to do the tricks of the brush. Mr Saha should remember that novelty has no value in art.

**A New Group**

"Artists Image"—a new group—recently exhibited its paintings at the Academy of Fine Arts. The group is still immature but there are some promising signs. Among the five artists Prithwis Sen stands out with his feel for the problems, both aesthetic and personal. His 'Fossil' had a haunting quality with its deft organisation of space and judicious use of colours. His 'Nile Civilization'—a painting done like a collage, had an evocative quality but the question remains—why paint something which could have been a collage?

**Barun Simlai's Exhibition**

Barun Simlai had his first one-man show at his 'Simlai Cafe' — a small wayside teastall near the Sikh Gurdwara at Rashbehari Junction. In some ways it reminded one of Prakash Karmakar's pavement exhibition in 1959. People who had never been to an exhibition came over shyly, pretending to drink tea, while they saw the exhibits. Along with the people came the modern poets, artists, journalists, critics and the din was great. Barun Simlai served tea to the customers, chatted with the arty people and sometimes even hummed a tune. He even sold his drawings at throw-away prices for the fun of it and his paintings for a paltry sum. He gave his art exhibition a character which it lacks in the galleries.

He strongly reminded me of Nikhil Biswas—I am not comparing personalities but a certain similarity is in the works. Praticularly the brown paper used by Nikhil is also used by Simlai. There are certain other similarities—the way of executing a stroke the themes, but on second thoughts I think Nikhil's influence on Barun is slight. Barun has his own world too—the world that is still in the womb of his mind. His drawings are more interesting than his paintings. Bold, powerful lines speak of his latent talents, although it seems he has not yet found suitable imagery. But, it is evident that the search is on.

## *Clippings*

# A 'Hero' Of Our Times

MARTHA WINNACKER

Japan is astir with the story of Lieutenant Onoda Hiroo, the Japanese Imperial Army intelligence officer who finally surrendered in the Philippines 29 years after the end of World War II. His March 10 'rescue" has not only dominated the Japanese media but jolted the national psyche.

The story has many facets: the image of Spartan rigour, death-defying courage and unswerving loyalty that mark one soldier in a million; and the actuality of a common armed bandit who murdered and stole from Filipinos long after he knew the war was over; the joyous receptions accorded Onoda by the Marcos regime and the Tanaka Government; and the crude politicking of right-wingers capitalizing on the propaganda value of the "Onoda boom".

The time was ripe for Onoda's carefully engineered "rescue", and the scramble to take advantage of it reveals the interlocking interests of Japan's right-wing, the Tanaka Government, and the Marcos regime. While Marcos and Tanaka are using the opportunity to cement their economic relationship, the Japanese right is out to capitalize on Onoda as an example of Japan's lost "moral backbone".

...But Onoda is not merely a pawn of the right. Unlike Lt. Yokoi Shoichi, another straggler who returned from Guam in 1972, Onoda is a member of the military elite. While Yokoi was a rank and file drafted to serve in a transport unit, Onoda was raised in a military family and then groomed at the Imperial Army's intelligence officer school known as Nakano Academy.

All three of his brothers were already military officers when Onoda entered the Academy for training as an intelligence officer and guerrilla leader, a combination of CIA agent and Green Beret. Automatically classified as war criminals immediately after the war, the school's graduates were notorious for their discipline and unquestioning loyalty. The Nakano version of *bushido* (samurai spirit) is summed up in the school song:

"Communist defenses are nothing to us,
With our undefeated army advance west or south, raise our horses to the top of the Urals.
Our comrades go everywhere flaming with passion and firmly maintaining the great ideal
'Eight corners under one roof'"

Onoda arrived in Lubang on Christmas day, 1944, with orders to "stay alive at any cost, even if Japanese forces are annihilated". When American troops landed there in 1945, Onoda commanded the 100 to 200 Japanese survivors on the island. He ordered all of them—infantrymen and sailors alike—to go to the hills and fight as guerillas.

For most of those who survived repeated skirmishes and bombing attacks, the war finally ended in March, 1946, (seven months after Japan's surrender) when forty men surrendered. Four men remained in the Lubang jungle—Onoda and three followers, of whom one

...dered in 1951 and one was killed in 1954.

Armed with a transistor radio, Onoda knew that the war had ended. Rather than blind obedience to an order, his decision to stay in the jungle was a deliberate choice to carry out a mission behind "enemy lines". Onoda continued to fight, harass and loot. He and fellow stragglers in Lubang are blamed for 30 deaths, more than 100 injuries and substantial damage to crops and property—facts almost ignored by the Japanese media. But Philippine villagers greeted Onoda's surrender with the comment: "We are happy because now our farmers can go freely to the mountains and will no longer be afraid."

Onoda spent much of his time drawing detailed maps, preparing for a second invasion of the Philippines by a new Japanese Imperial Army.

This history stands in sharp contrast to that of Yokoi, who was isolated and afraid to come into the open. The Japanese media draw a sharp distinction between the "man who survived" (Yokoi) and the "man who fought" (Onoda). Accordingly, their welcomes also contrast sharply. Yokoi was an object of curiosity and sympathy, a sort of grotesque victim of the imperial system, but for his thirty years of private warfare against innocent villagers, Onoda is cast as a hero.

...When Philippine generals and ultimately President Marcos accepted Onoda's surrender, their smiles seemed strange for the representatives of a country whose citizens this man had been murdering. But with public opinion silenced by martial law, Marcos could afford to call Onoda "a great soldier".

In exchange for granting Onoda amnesty for "any crimes committed during 30 years", Marcos will receive $1,000,000 "to express Japan's gratitude for the rescue of Onoda Hiroo". Marcos and Tanaka need each other, Marcos, who needs money to keep the martial law machinery running, is fighting for big increases in Japanese aid and invesment. In particular, he hopes that his treatment of Onoda will convince Japanese capitalists that anti-Japanese feeling in the Philippines has subsided—and encourage them to be leading investors in his planned Bataan industrial complex.

Tanaka needs heroes like Onoda to shore up his sagging party, which faces dire prospects in the July Diet elections.

The Onoda affair is much bigger than one man's dramatic story. It reflects a society, and especially a media, which is hungry for heroes. The Japanese media have had a field day in portraying Onoda as a link with a glorious past when being Japanese meant more than "economic animals", kowtowing to the U.S. Government abroad and nihilistic materialism at home.

But to fish military heroes out of the '30s and '40s will ultimately prove only that history repeats itself—as many Asian peoples already fear.

(New Asia News, Tokyo, March 21, 1974)

## Letters

### 'CPI(ML) Congress

The document published in *Frontier* (23-2-74) in the name of the CPI (ML) Congress is a resolution taken up by a group of revolutionaries and not by the party CPI (ML) as a whole. Some revolutionaries held the said second (ninth) congress at some place in the district of Burdwan, West Bengal. The resolution raised in the congress did not face any opposition. There was no ideological fight between the two main lines. Comrade Mahadev Mukherjee was unanimously elected general secretary. Many provincial and local committees of the party were not invited, were not even aware of it before the congress was held.

We know that much earlier Comrade Satyanarayan Singh had also held a meeting of an unknown Central Committee of the party, where Comrade Charu Majumdar, the founder-member and the general secretary of the party, was 'ousted".

Both these wings meet no opposition at their meetings. Which means that the 'congress' and the 'meeting' were not the products of a dialectical process.

The M. M. wing supports the line of Charu Majumdar and Lin Piao, but opposes the line of the Tenth Congress of the CPC and opposes thereby, Mao Tse tung. The M. M. wing which held the "Ninth Congress" has portrayed Charu Majumdar as God in an article in the issue of *Deshabrati*, thereby opposing the line of Charu Majumdar, who was a Marxist.

There is another wing in the party which has abandoned the line of Charu Majumdar without convening a congress. This line shaped after Souren Bose's return, allegedly from China. Kanu Sanyal and some other revalutionaries including S.N.S. and Ashim Chatterjee urged the comrades to give up the line of Charu Majumdar and follow the 'advice' of Chou En-Lai and Kang Seng. But they do not mention that those leaders of China once said, "With the leadership of Comrade Charu Majumdar in the armed struggle India's future is bright". The editorial of *Liberation* (September 1973) expressed its indirect support to Kanu Sanyal's line but did not pay any red salute to either Mao Tse-tung or the Tenth Congress of the CPC. There was no hint of the fall of Lin Piao. The Editor or Editors of *Liberation* (September 1973) do not admit that the people's armed forces of India emerged during the period of the first stage of our revolution in 1967-72. They merely said in the same editorial, 'Through these struggles will emerge the people's armed foces".

Perhaps the main body in the party consists of those who have assesed the first stage of the revolution and re-accepted the line of the first (Eighth) Congress and of Charu Majumdar. The Central Committee took up a

resolution in this respect and circulated their firm decision in 1972. But we see that a line quite contrary to that of Charu Majumdar has captured *Liberation*. How this has occurred, the genuine revolutionaries do not know. The followers of Charu Majumdar still firmly believe that strikes, mass movements and gheraos cannot liberate India, that guerilla war is the only way of India's liberation. It does not mean that other forms of struggle except guerilla war are not to be utilised anywhere. The followers of CPC support fully the Tenth Congress of the CPC and thereby accept the fall of Lin Piao.

The Editors (perhape sharma and Suniti Ghosh) of *Liberation* (September-73) abandoned the line of Charu Majumdar and disobeyed the decision of the Central Committee (December 72). Now they are trying to impose their undemocratic neo-revisionist line on the genuine fighters, because they also did not hold any real congress, did not take up the opinions of the majority.

There is aa section of CM's followers, who held high the first Congress and the line of Charu Majumdar. But they do not support the language of the slogan, 'China's Chairman is our Chairman". They fully accept Mao Tse-tung as the leader of the world revolution, but say that the slogan should have been different.

Now revolution in India demands, that all the wings of the party should convene a real congress where every active member of a representative committee can take part in the ideological fight and the decision of the majority can be established. Only then there will be the possibility of unity among the fighters for India's revolution. Or they may unite, not by slandering themselves, but by fighting the people's common enemy—imperialism and feudalism. Of course one can never forget that a Communist party is a semi-militant party, and without a firm democratic centralism in the party, the people's enemy cannot be vanquished.

SUFAL MALIK
Burdwan

## Mao And Lin

Mr M. N. D. Nair in his letter (March 10, 1974) claims that "Mao himself says that Lin Piao was a 'conspirator and double dealer'" and refers to "Mao's action in regard to Lin Piao."

Will Mr Nair be kind enough to enlighten us about the source of this extraordinary piece of information? We would be much obliged if he could mention the exact source — whether a speech or an article—where Chairman Mao Tse-tung himself has denounced Lin Piao as a "conspirator and double dealer". We would be grateful even if he could mention a single occasion so far where Mao Tse-tung has spoken against Lin Piao —whether at the 10th Congress of the CPC or elsewhere.

B. S.
Calcutta

## Political Prisoners

Demands for immediate release of all political prisoners being detained indefinitely without trial and criticising their maltreatment were raised by writers at a meeting held in the Students' Hall under the auspices of Sanskriti Parishad. One minute's silence was abserved to pay homage to the martyrs killed behind bars. The poet, Birendra Chatterjee, presided Kazi Sabyasachi Islam recited two poems of Nazrul and one of Birendra Chatterjee. A statement sent by Dr Arabinda Poddar and a letter from Mr Hemanga Biswas were read. Prof. Saurindranath Bhattacharjee, Dr Ashok Mitra and Mr Jyotsna Sinha Roy criticised very sharply the savage measures, unheard of even during the British regime, now being used by the present Government and the utter indifferences on the part of the intelligentsia. Dr Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee moved the resolution which was passed unanimously.

SANSKRITI PARISHAD

## Justice

I was a practising advocate [illegible] City Civil & Sessions Court, Calcutta. Recently I suspended practice and am now a law officer [illegible] business concern.

On 20-3-1974 when I went to [illegible] Third Bench of the City Court [illegible] meet a friend I learnt that the trying of the Nepal Roy murder [illegible] was going on in that court. The Senior Public Prosecutor in the court was pressing an application on behalf of an approver in that case [illegible] his classification. The approver [illegible] in jail custody in connection with another case in a different court. On the mere statement of the Public Prosecutor that the approver had monthly income of Rs. 1200 from his agricultural land in North Bengal (without any police report to that effect) the Sessions Judge ordered that the said witness be treated as a Division I undertrial prisoner.

How could such an order be passed in respect of a prisoner who is undertrial in a different case in a differeent court? It was for the court to pass such an order on an application filed by the prisoner in that court. The approver has been granted pardon in the Nepal Roy murder case and is no longer in jail custody in connection with that case.

R. Sn
Calcutta

## Lotus Eaters

You have rightly pointed out in "Lotus Eaters" (23.3.74) that the cease-work movement of doctors and engineers is a classic example of blowing hot and cold from both sides. It is an expression of the inner contradiction of the ruling classes. Since doctors and engineers are also part of the machinery, of a comparatively minor nature, of exploitation in the hands of the ruling class, the rebels within the machinery would be welcome by the toiling people and de-

democratic masses who are watching for even a minimum change in the minimal exploitative administrative set-up of not much help to the people in the basic sense, is ruled out in the independent democratic (?) governments. The independent government will not use science and technology for the development of the country and people for whom they shed tears very often. If the country takes a little step towards self-reliance through science and technology, the exploitation by vested interests might be less. It is once again clear that this Government at the Centre and their counterparts in the States are semi-colonial and semi-feudal in character.

The democratic core of the struggling doctors and engineers should analyse the problem in totality. Piecemeal change or even total change in technical departments will help neither the people nor the doctors and engineers, who sincerely and honestly hope to serve the country and the people at large. It does not mean that they should withdraw from struggles on the periphery but that they must know the character of the Government and work towards integration with the people—the workers and peasantry who really build the country. Any basic change is due to the struggle of the people itself, not to any section of the intelligentsia alone.

I will not do to boast that they can bring about radical change in developmental works with minor changes in the few departments. This shows lack of vision of the whole machinery of the Government. A reformist outlook is that their enemy is neither the bureaucrats nor the Government but an age-old system. Don't they know that this age-old system is nurished and strengthened by vested interests through the Government and the bureaucracy of which they are also minister? Actually the Government tries to use them for its purpose. The leadership tries to force some concessions out of the contradictions and does not want to embarrass the Government on this basic point, as they are apparently reluctant to integrate their struggle with that of the broad masses. As such lotus eating going on from either side. But the social contradictions are ripening and the crisis is so spectacular that the leadership will not be able to limit the struggle within the bureaucratic steel-frame. Some of them have come out in the street against the opposition by some of their leader.

That is why the democratic masses will support their struggle so that there evolve a correct role for scientists, engineers, doctors and leaders in the days ahead with democratic collective leadership.

B. BAGCHI
Howrah, Salkia

## E.V.R. Again

My first letter was more to shed light than to generate heat. I never said that E.V.R. was a Marxist or a great revolutionary. As for Usha Narayanan's assertion that "no one wished the communists to join or support this movement against so-called casteism", I want to ask her who or what forces compelled them to join with this man of nuisance with his party during 1951-52? The popularity of E.V.R.'s D.K. was clearly indicated by the fact that while 13 of those supported by the D.K. were successful only 2 other communists won in all Madras. The 16 D.K.-supported candidates polled an average of 37% of the votes in their constituencies while the 34 others received only 18.4%. The CP had set up 50 candidates.

According to *Cross-roads*, the CPI organ of those days, the D.K.-Communist alliance was based on the following points: (1) The D.K stands for replacing the Congress. (2) It is a fighter for civil liberties. (3) It supports workers and peasants' struggle. (4) It is a friend of the USSR, People's China and the Liberation movements in Asia.

The two parties differed on Dravidasthan and anti-Brahminism. Dange thundered: "On the question of Dravidasthan and anti-Brahminism we don't agree. But our alliance will bring to it the *proletarian leadership which will ultimately change those features for the good of both parties and the people as a whole*" (emphasis mine).

Ajoy Ghosh, the then General Secretary of the CPI, emphasised that the CPI would never make truce with communal parties such as the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha or Jana Sangh but the D.K was essentially a progressive rather than a communal party.

Obviously the alliance did not go very far. The Communist Party itself did not have (does not have) proletarian leadership. How it was trying (?) to bring it in the D.K. is a mystery.

E.V.R., then, became progressive, etc. during elections but for movements against religion, caste, press, legislature etc. he was a 'communalist'!

To say that E.V.R. seldom had a feeling for touchables (since to write untouchable is constitutionally speaking wrong and the 'Harijan' coined by Gandhi is not acceptable to my conscience because in practice they are treated as sons of shit and killed and burnt regularly, is to forget history and twist facts which is least expected of a person who identifies 'class enemies' in funeral processions and accuses the dead.

Usha Narayanan might have forgotten his famous 'Vaikom Poratham' (struggle) in the early twenties when he was in the Congress. Was it not touchables? In 1925 he left the Congress for its alleged Brahmin domination. Brahmins were fed in a separate kitchen while others had their meals in one of the 'charity

---

For Frontier contact

POPULAR BOOK STALL,

Near Bank of India,

Bhadra

homes' (I think) of the Congress at that time. Is it not a fact that in the early thirties (after his return from the USSR) he organised a series of meetings and conferences demanding abolition of zamindari? Was he not jailed promptly for sedition? Let us face facts. Even before the communists were known in the villages of Tanjore, Periyar was known. The only party (other than the communist parties) which had an impact on touchables was the D.K. The simple uninhibited way of E.V.R.'s talking drew very large audiences in villages. The way in which he ridiculed the most sacred of the Hindu gods and epics and exposed to his audience hundreds of scandals and contradictions found in Hindu religious texts helped to mobilise the lower castes, particularly the 'touchables', against Brahmin oppression which was not a 'dead horse' in the thirties and forties. Rather the 3% Brahmins of Madras Presidency in the beginning of the century were virtually controlling all administrative and educational fields and thus it was a situation of the tail wagging the dog.

His 'self-respect' ("Suya Mariyadhy") movement was mainly to make the Dravidian proud of his non-Brahminness. The new type of marriages he introduced was rid of all vedic ceremonies and highborn' priests. Is it not a fact that he gave full support in the early twenties for his young niece to get married again after she had lost her husband early in marriage? He was the only man with courgae to speak openly even in the early thirties and the forties against oppression of women. He propagated the idea of widow remarriage, marriage based on consent, women's right to *abortion*, to divorce, to property etc. When he was told that there is no Tamil word for the male counterpart of an adulteress he with anger said... the word adulteress clearly shows how man thinks woman is a slave, a commodity to be sold and bought, to be hired. Even some three years ago, at a conference he openly declared that no immorality should be attached to a woman who desires a man other than her husband (which of course was twisted and distorted by the Brahmin bourgeois Madras press). Once he even called for abolition of marriage to liberate women.

As for Usha Narayanan's information that the income of temples has trebled it only shows that blackmarketeers, pimps, prostitutes, profiteers, bureaucrats, technocrats and 'sarkar intellectuals' of sorts have all become rich overnight in Tamil Nadu and nothing else. If Vinayaka temples come up all over Madras E.V.R. can't be blamed. In a similar analogy after 100 year's of Marx exploitation in the world continues. I never said that E.V.R. abolished casteism or religion in Tamil Nadu. The aristocratic, traditional rich go to Mylapore temples and the new rich go to Karumarian there is no use lamenting over this. The 'Adigal' whom Usha Narayanan mentions as having joined the funeral procession, I think, can be seen in Afro-Asian solidarity meets, world peace conferences and such like tamashas with committed 'anti-intellectual government pimps' in Tamil Nadu.

About E.V.R. acquiring money (not by blackmarketing or by contracts) from his followers nothing can be said and I suppose Usha Narayanan will soon accuse E.V.R. for not forming a PLA for liberating the country.

In Madras Corporation there is a 40-year-old convention which governs the mayoral election which ordains that a Brahmin, a Muslim, a Christian and a non-Brahmin Hindu and a Harijan be elected to the mayoral office on strictly communal rotation. This anachronism was introduced by A. Ramaswami Mudaliar when he was president of the corporation. This is referred as A.R. convention. Can Usha Narayanan boldly say that communists (old, new et all) boycotted in stupidity? Even some years ago the 'communist Brahmin' was the mayor; he is a leader in CITU now.

As for E.V.R.'s periodic alliances with the Congress and DMK nothing can be said. He used the parties effectively for his non-Brahmin tirade. Of course he never understood the class-caste distinction. But Tamil nationalism is different from class struggle. The communists however never combined the two.

E.V.R. was essentially a social reformer and an angry rebel. India is a racist society with millions of 'touchables' treated as animals. At least the SPCA is there for animals. Our elections decide who should exploit economically all the poor and preserve these racism. Tell me of one election in the country which is not conducted on the basis of caste. Tell me of one leader of status who really represents the 'touchables'.

Every 'touchable' in Tamil Nadu respects E.V.R. for the simple reason that he spoke in a simple (described as crude by the highbrow press) language and made them feel like human beings. Of course they were not told about class struggle by E.V.R. It is the duty of communists to do that.

Ani
Calc

Our sole agent in Bangladesh

CHALANTIKA BAIGHAR

14, Banglabazar

Dacca-1

For Frontier contact

NAVODYA PUBLISHERS,

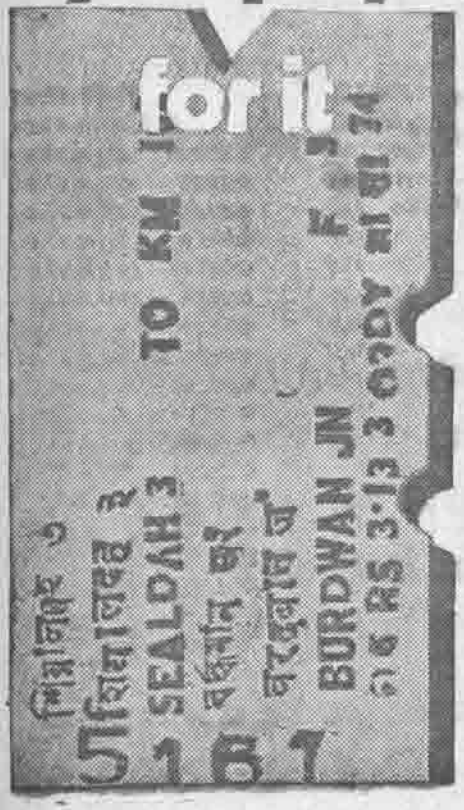
Eluru Road,

Vijayawada-2,

Andhra Pradesh.

# Ticketless Travel costs the nation millions

## And you pay




We wish everyone was as honest as you. We wish everyone bought tickets like you did.

But they don't—and ticketless travel costs the Indian Railways millions of rupees a year. This loss is a loss for you, too.

Because fares pay for amenities; for improvements in railway compartments, on railway platforms and in railway services. What's more, a ticketless traveller often deprives you of a seat which you've paid for.

Discourage ticketless travel. And support the checking staff.

***Ticketless Travel hurts the honest people.***

TCP/ER275

EASTERN RAILWAY

Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers of India under R.N.16516/68

# *AN APPEAL*

***In view of the acute shortage of newsprint and the rising cost of everything under the sun, we reduced the number of pages and increased the price of 'Frontier'. But it is difficult to keep pace with the run-away inflation.***

***We are therefore compelled to appeal to our readers and well-wishers for donations to 'Frontier'. We do so reluctantly, for we are aware of the general hardship.***